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PREFACE

I THINK it is useful and necessary to explain at once the particular point of view from which I describe in this study the life of a community of Greek Sarakatsani shepherds. I begin with an analysis, in some detail, of kinship institutions and the structure of the family, which emphasizes how an individual's moral obligations are concentrated almost exclusively within family and kindred at the expense of his relations with people outside that relatively limited circle. Families not connected by kinship or marriage are related through institutions of mutual hostility and competition; and unrelated persons view one another at all times with intense distrust. A system of social values based on concepts of honour, strength, and pride is associated with these institutions and attitudes, and together they guide the conduct of Sarakatsani in the apparent anarchy of their communal life. Inevitably these institutions and values severely limit the possible forms of economic and civic co-operation. Further, they considerably affect the character of the relations between this community of mutually opposed family commonwealths and the rest of Greek society. Given a centralized administration, and parliamentary government with a universal franchise, an implication of the internal structure of the community is that these relations tend to take certain forms of political and social patronage. Honour, Family, and Patronage represent a pattern of interrelated institutions and values.

In this book I have attempted to abstract for the purposes of analysis a particular complex of institutions and values which are not peculiar to the Sarakatsani. Very similar formal elements are critical for the study of society anywhere in the Greek provinces, and even, in many respects, in the cities. Moreover, the social forms which are described here have many interesting parallels in other parts of the Mediterranean world, and it is principally as a contribution to the study of social structures in this area that I offer my study.

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COLLATERAL KINSMEN

1. FAVOURS AND OBLIGATIONS

THE Sarakatsani assume that ill-faith, doubt, and suspicion characterize the relations of men who are not kinsmen. In contrast, they think that the values and attitudes which make possible the communion of kinsmen are expressed in the meaning of *ἐμπιστοσύνη*, faith, trust, confidence; or *πίστη*, faith, belief. It is, then, not surprising that unrelated men very rarely co-operate in the management of their sheep or in any other venture; except, necessarily, the marriages of their children.

The rights and obligations of kinship are of a general and diffuse kind, not restricted to specific situations. A man is confident that a kinsman will keep a secret. He opens his mind to him freely because he knows he will use discretion in what he should pass on and what he must not. He believes the information that a kinsman gives to him, and he uses it as a basis for action without the fear of a lie or a trap. He is confident that when his own conduct is being evaluated by the community his kinsmen will support his case; and for his part he will not suffer in silence the public criticism of any of his kin. Above all, he feels secure and confident that when he is in difficulty there will be people who care for his interests and will give him assistance. These sentiments of confidence and trust are prescribed and follow from the simple existence of the kin relationship; they do not depend on the history of a gradually developing intimacy.

When a Sarakatsanos receives a favour from another, he must show gratitude. 'One good turn deserves another' (*ἡ χάρη θέλει ἀντιχάρεη*). Even if only between the acceptance of some service and its later repayment, gratitude must for a while act as a makeweight in the balance. Not to show gratitude for help, which has been freely given, is behaviour open to severe public reproach. But to be grateful is to be 'obliged' (*ὀποχρεωμένος*); and this is an admission of inequality and even of weakness. The rare attempts at co-operation between unrelated persons have invariably ended in accusations and counter accusations that one man has done more for the other who, in return, has

609 not shown the right attitude of a man under obligation. This,
 578 in a sense, is true. For neither side can admit to obligation with-
 [558] out losing prestige; and both must attempt to claim the super-
 ordinate position in a creditor-debtor relationship.

612 But a man does not feel any embarrassment in asking for
 help from a kinsman. In these circumstances there is no shame
 in being under obligation or a debt of gratitude. Irrespective of
 the state of the balance of favours and counter favours, collateral
 relatives of the same generation, by reason of their kinship, are
 conceptually equal since they are descended from a pair of
 siblings who, before marriage and apart from the chances of
 [554] age and sex, were socially equivalent persons. A man does not
 lose prestige through obligation to a kinsman; on the contrary
 his reputation is increased, for the community pays attention to
 a person whose kinsmen lend him immediate and effective sup-
 port. And for the man who gives aid to his kin, the knowledge
 that men learn of his actions through the gratitude of the kins-
 man who receives it, is sufficient recompense. For in this way he
 wins a reputation as a man of honour 'who supports his kins-
 men'. If through wealth or influence a man is in a position to
 act as a general protector of his kindred, not only is he expected
 to do so, but this, in most cases, is also his wish. There is some
 altruism here. A man takes pleasure in the company of his kins-
 man; he finds him on occasion a source of practical advantage,
 but in particular he holds to him and has confidence in him
 simply because he is a kinsman. And for these reasons com-
 plaints of ingratitude against kinsmen are relatively few.

612 But although a man is under a moral obligation to help a
 627 collateral relative, this assistance is not given unconditionally.
 The important consideration is that it must not conflict with the
 interests of the family. This emerges very clearly in situations of
 physical violence. A man is not expected to accept responsibility
 for avenging the death of a collateral kinsman. He will give moral
 support to the family of the victim but he is unlikely to go
 [682] farther than that. A vengeance killing leads to the arrest of the
 killer and a prison sentence, which is sometimes followed by
 self-imposed exile in another district of Greece when there is any
 fear of counter vengeance. In this way a shepherd's family
 might lose its protector at least for some years, perhaps for ever.
 Only in unusual circumstances where a man feels that his

605 her parents' home and takes her young children with her. These
 574 visits which last for five or six days are eagerly looked forward
 [573] to by the children who find there new playfellows and grand-
 parents, uncles, and aunts far more indulgent than those at their
 own home. The inevitable frictions and jealousies of communal
 life do not threaten the cross-cousin relationship in its formative
 period; on the contrary it grows in an atmosphere of gaiety,
 holiday, and permissiveness. It is, then, not surprising that in
 seven cases out of ten a man names a cousin of this category as
 [426] his most intimate and trusted friend. In later life these cousins
 are remarkably generous and trusting, and there is a noticeable
 tendency for cousins related in this way to give small money
 loans at moments of need or unexpected crisis.

In general, cousins who are related through their mothers'
 sisters are less likely to have known one another in childhood,
 and relations in adult life are usually based on the conventional
 605 existence of cousinship. Married sisters do not pay one another
 574 the kind of formal visit which lasts for a number of days unless
 593 their husbands have developed common interests on the basis
 of their affinal connection. Relations will be more intimate
 where the two sisters have married men who live in the same
 summer or winter neighbourhood. The two women will make
 informal daily visits and their husbands will encourage the
 [582] children to form close friendships with their cousins. Sometimes
 a man arranges a marriage between his own cousin and his
 wife's sister. If the cousin is a father's brother's son, the two
 sisters may find themselves close neighbours and, perhaps, work-
 ing in the same co-operating 'company'. Yet even where two
 605 young men who are sisters' sons meet for the first time at a
 • [607] wedding or village festival they at once adopt the easy, friendly,
 and sympathetic attitude towards one another which is typical
 of the cousin relationship at all times, and equally foreign to
 the behaviour which must be adopted towards an unrelated
 person of the same sex and age, even where this unrelated person
 has been a close neighbour and has shared the same school desk.

[597] The feature of cross-cousin or maternal parallel cousin re-
 lationships which distinguishes them from the ties between
 brothers' sons is that they generally involve physical separation,
 since sisters in a system of patrilocal marriage must leave the
 parental home. Men prefer to bring their brides from a distant

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less effective is the response. To some extent this is so even ⁵⁹⁶ where the reasons for delay are physical: for instance, the killer ⁵⁷⁷ is in prison, or the avenger is not yet adult. But it is said that if ⁶²⁷ an affront to honour remained unanswered over a period of ⁵⁸⁸ years after an adult unmarried avenger was available and the killer physically present in the community, then the quality of the dishonour ascribed to the family would be such that an eventual vengeance killing would not reinstate the reputation of the victim's family. For, on grounds of damaging conjectures about the personal motives for this delay, other families would be able to continue asserting the relative integrity of their own honour by denying it to the family of the victim. The case is hypothetical since there has been no instance of this kind in recent years, but it is indicative of Sarakatsan thinking on this matter.

The defence of family honour is at once an indication of family solidarity and a process which recreates it. The honour of the family, the solidarity of this group, and the mutual responsibility of its members, are correlated notions. It is true that passive solidarity does not extend to questions of vengeance where a life is demanded, but in other respects it is complete. A man may suffer physical assault for the offence of his father, brother, or son. Further, if one member of a family acts dishonourably, all the other members of the family lose honour in the eyes of the community. If a man is killed or a sister's betrothal is broken, and the family remains inactive, all its members are equally dishonoured. Since all are responsible for the actions of any one, every member is accountable to every other member. All the members of the family necessarily form a single solidary group for the protection of their common honour.

2. HOSTILITY BETWEEN UNRELATED FAMILIES

In the preceding chapters we have seen that for each individual this community is divided into the two opposite but complementary ⁶¹⁹ categories of kinsmen and strangers; trust marking relations ⁶⁰² in the one category, distrust in the other. Distrust prevents ⁶⁰⁹ co-operation between shepherds who are not kinsmen or affines, ⁵²⁸ and the four or five men that are necessary to manage a flock are either father and sons or a co-operative 'company' of kinsmen and relatives by marriage. Moreover, the produce of the

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Moreover, the produce of the flock is sold to persons outside the community. No Sarakatsanos who remains a member of the community acts as a trader or shopkeeper. Indeed, unrelated families are only dependent on one another in two significant ways, for marriage partners and social reputation. In both instances this form of dependence helps to breed hostility and suspicion, which is all the more intense since there are no other forms of social or economic co-operation. Perhaps, too, the dispersed character of the community, and the fact that for most of the time shepherds are bound to the care of their animals, allow attitudes of intense hostility without giving too frequent opportunities for its physical expression.

The hostility that exists between unrelated families is encouraged by the belief that their interests are mutually destructive. There is the story that after he had created the other countries, God had a few stones and rocks left in his sack. He threw these over his shoulder and they became the land of Greece. It is believed that there are not enough resources and wealth to satisfy the needs of everybody, and that therefore the success and prosperity of other families is necessarily a threat to the very existence of one's own. It follows that a man must rejoice when another suffers misfortune and 'falls in the mud' (πέφτει στη λάσπη). For the Sarakatsani, these beliefs have an immediate relevance. If the village President allots one man an area of good summer grass, another must receive an area of indifferent grazing. Again, in the winter, pasture is scarce, and every family that has successfully negotiated for its requirements of winter grass leaves less for the others. Whether it is a question of material assets or social prestige the Sarakatsani see life as a kind of seesaw. If one family goes up in the world the others must necessarily come down.

The hostility between unrelated families is intimately related to the nature of rights and obligations inside the elementary family. These have a diffuse character; that is to say, a man is obliged to support his brothers, sisters, parents, or children in every situation and circumstance unless this assistance conflicts with other and higher obligations. But not only do all a man's significant interests fall within the limits of the family, but in most contexts loyalty to the family is the supreme social value. Moreover, there is no social group in this community

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which through common membership can commit him to any⁵⁷¹ duty towards persons with whom he is not related by kinship⁶⁰⁹ or marriage. Indeed, any relationship with an unrelated person⁵⁹³ would be regarded by other members of the family as a form of⁵⁷⁸ betrayal. For a man's energies and affections belong to his family and his relatives, and to nobody else. This explains why personal friendship with an unrelated person, based simply on liking and sympathy, is impossible. There is devoted friendship between cousins, but even here we have seen that such an association is immediately sacrificed if any friction develops between the two families. The solidarity of the family resides in its exclusiveness and opposition to those who do not belong. And any relationship between one of its members and an outsider, which is not shared by the others, necessarily weakens it.

The mutual distrust of unrelated families emerges very⁵⁷¹ clearly on those rare occasions when for some specific purpose⁶⁰⁹ they are forced into co-operation. During the summer a hut is⁴⁷⁶ established high in the mountains above the village so that the²³⁴ various shepherds who have sold their milk to a particular mer-⁵⁷⁸chant are able to deliver it twice a day to his agents who at once turn it into cheese. Towards the end of July these operations come to an end, and it is then the responsibility of those selling their milk to the merchant to carry down to the village on their mules the machinery, utensils, and the mass of accumulated cheeses. The cheese-maker and his assistant calculate from their books the total quantity of milk which each family has delivered during the whole summer, and in proportion to these quantities each family is allotted so many mule-loads of cheeses and equipment, which it is their duty to transport as far as the village. But the assessment of these loads by the cheese-maker is not accepted without many amendments and bitter wrangling. The cream separator for instance is a heavy, awkward thing to load on a mule. Who is to say what the equivalent in cheeses or smaller pieces of equipment may be? Each family is determined not to be outmanœuvred by the others into performing any service which can possibly be avoided, and no trust is placed by anybody in the impartiality of the cheese-maker. It sometimes happens that the family which has sold the largest quantity of milk has only one mule, while another group with only a small flock possesses three or four pack

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- 571 animals. But this never leads to a comradely offer of assistance
 ● 609 which might finish the task in a single mule train. A man with
 578 a single animal may have to struggle three or four times in
 476 the day up and down to the village while the man with three
 234 or four mules sits and watches as his animals graze in idleness.

All social relations between unrelated persons are pervaded by this attitude of distrust. We may recall how sometimes in marriage negotiations the girl's family try to conceal her shortcomings and attempt by implication to suggest that a more attractive younger sister is the prospective bride. A man and his family distrust unrelated people because they expect to be exploited and tricked by them. They admit that they themselves would act in a similar manner. They say that a man must protect his family, and to do this in the world as he finds it some cunning and some lies are necessary.

- 571 Before 1937, the mutual hostility of unrelated families found
 609 an institutionalized form of expression in the custom of 'animal
 578 theft' (ζωοκλοπή), more especially of sheep. Although the
 685 severity of the penalties introduced by the government of Metaxas effectively stifled this activity almost overnight, most of the heads of families are old enough to remember the alarms
 [554] and excitements of sheep theft. The desire to steal is still privately expressed (and occasionally indulged in) and the qualities of courage and intelligence which were necessary in these adventures are still the ideal attributes of the hero and 'pallikari'. As we shall see, theft of another sort has now replaced it. But one cannot doubt that but for the pressure of the State law sheep theft would still be a vigorous institution.

- The more general form of sheep theft was the small-scale expedition undertaken by a lone individual or in company with one or two trusted kinsmen. The object was to steal one or two sheep from the flock of an unrelated man, transport the animals with speed to the huts of the families involved where the sheep were at once killed, roasted, and eaten, as a precaution against
 [602] the discovery of incriminating evidence. Sheep were never stolen from kinsmen or affines and generally not from other flocks in the immediate vicinity. This precaution was taken not from any neighbourly spirit, but because it was realized that, if two neighbouring groups engaged in a sequence of theft and counter-theft, shepherding would soon become impossible, and the

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strength of both flocks would rapidly be reduced to vanishing point. The evidence suggests that small-scale theft was not generally found among those families using the grazing lands of the same village, but was concentrated on the flocks within the territory of immediately neighbouring villages, that is to say in an area some 5-10 miles distant from the homesteads of the thieves. But at this distance an expedition became a planned undertaking requiring the absence of shepherds for perhaps two days and nights from their own sheep, a circumstance which significantly limited the frequency of these raids. It is extremely difficult to assess what was the frequency, but it seems unlikely that the average family enjoyed this sport more often than four or five times in a summer.

The Sarakatsani justify animal theft on the grounds that before 1937 a man could not provide his family with enough food without stolen meat. It was, therefore, an honourable undertaking. Moreover, since other men stole your animals, both interest and honour demanded retaliation. The older men are lyrical about the satisfaction of eating a stolen sheep by moonlight. A man only kills his own animals for meat at important social and religious celebrations, and then with reluctance. The stolen sheep was a luxury, a luxury at the enemy's expense.

After these expeditions, a shepherd was torn between the precaution of secrecy and the desire to win renown for the daring and cleverness of his exploits. He would openly boast about the number of sheep he had recently lifted, but would not generally reveal their original owner. The latter, however, on his own account or through the reports of kinsmen, formed certain shrewd suspicions. In any event, whether he suspected the identity of the thief or not, he had to take some retaliatory action on somebody since otherwise he would not only become a laughing-stock, but a prey to other thieves sensing an easy victim. The best defence against theft was swift retaliation with interest. Even where a man was sure of the thief's identity, his retaliation against the flock of the stani of which the thief was a member might not fall on a sheep or sheep which belonged to the original thief. Therefore, in either instance, an original act of sheep theft might lead to a series of thefts not necessarily confined to the original participants.

- 571 There existed also a more ambitious form of sheep theft,
609 which was less often attempted, partly because of the considerable danger and partly because it made even greater demands
578 on the time and energy of the thieves than the variety already
685 described. Three or four kinsmen, travelling swiftly from their homes, arrived at the victims' grazing land about dusk. As soon as it grew dark, they cut out fifty or so sheep and, using a carefully prospected route, drove the animals through the hours of darkness to a secluded river bed or forest clearing, which was distant both from the thieves' own home and the home of the
[429] victim. From this place of relative security, the animals were delivered in batches to some Jannina livestock merchant for slaughter; the latter would ask no questions, but also paid a
[422] price less than the market rate. Sometimes the ear-signs on the animals were carefully altered and the animals were added, some to the flocks of the thieves, and others to those of kinsmen who lived at a distance from the victim. Care was taken to arrange a wide distribution of the animals so that the chances of recognition were less than if the animals remained together in a single body. For reasons analogous to those already given for the avoidance of small-scale sheep theft on the flocks of immediate neighbours, these more ambitious operations were carried out at even greater distance from the homes of the raiders, generally at the farthest limit of the community some 15-20 miles distant, or on the flocks of Koutsovlachs beyond the community boundary. Fear of massive retaliation also prevented men from boasting about this kind of exploit, at least until some
[556] years after the event. Secrecy was essential. Nevertheless, the prestige motive was not altogether lacking from these thefts, since wealth, either in money or in sheep, was an important element in the prestige standing of a family.

Before 1937 it seems possible to distinguish, in very broad outline, three areas and modes of hostility. Towards unrelated families, within a radius of some five miles from a family's own sheep, hostility was expressed in attitude rather than act. There existed constant distrust and suspicion, but an avoidance of provocation. In the second area, stretching beyond the first to a distance of ten miles and often somewhat farther, hostility found expression in the small-scale theft of sheep; the frequency of these acts, however, was limited by considerations of time and

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distance and perhaps a certain moderation sanctioned by the fear of too many reprisals. In the third and farthest area of the community, any individual family only rarely, and possibly never, undertook hostile raiding operations on an ambitious scale; here again the frequency of these acts was limited by considerations of time and distance, and more certainly by the fear of retaliation. According to the distance which separated unrelated families, there was a certain inverse relation between the frequency of hostile contact and the severity of its manner of expression.

The vigorous measures of Metaxas ended extensive sheep theft. But today hostility still finds a parallel form of expression. Since 1937 the sheep population of the Zagori has considerably increased, with the result that the lands of most of the summer villages are over-grazed; it is now the constant anxiety of each group that its animals may not find enough grass to mate effectively and resist disease, let alone return a good milk yield. At the beginning of each summer, the President of the village allots to each family or 'company' grazing land in proportion to the size of each flock. If the number of Sarakatsani sheep entitled to graze on the land of the village increases, there is less grass for each sheep. In a very obvious sense the size and condition of a family's flock are threatened by the sheep of other families, and the grass they eat. It is now too dangerous to steal the sheep, but it is possible to steal the grass. During the summer heat, sheep are grazed at night; the technique of grass stealing is to pasture sheep just over the boundary dividing a man's own land from that of his immediate neighbour, but never so deeply into his territory that he cannot retreat rapidly at the approach of the other shepherd or the agricultural guard. It is the duty of this official to summon all offenders before the local agricultural court, where fines, generally of the order of two or three pounds, are levied. It is very doubtful if the value of the grass taken in the course of the trespassing is equivalent to the fines which are paid, even if the fact is ignored that a neighbour is almost certainly making similar raids in the opposite direction. The Sarakatsani are well aware of these facts, but they feel that inactivity would be weakness and would be so interpreted by the neighbouring groups. It is the consciousness and certainty of the hostile intent of other families threatening

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571 the group from without which drives it to reciprocal action.
 609 There is no missing the intense satisfaction expressed by shep-
 233 herds after a successful night's grazing on another's grass. Such
 578 acts define the exclusiveness and prepotency of a family group
 605 against other family groups and the world in general.

Under present-day conditions the distinction between different ways of showing enmity towards immediate neighbours and more distantly situated families is not so immediately clear, but nevertheless exists. In its relations with another family group using the grazing land of the same village, a family maintains a measure of restraint it would not be concerned to show in chance encounters with families which live at a distance. We have shown how a grass thief is careful never to stray too far across the boundary of his neighbour. He does not boast about these exploits, and if accused would deny that he was aware he had crossed the line. Similarly, the victim, unless he accidentally comes upon the thief red-handed, is unlikely to make wild or insulting accusations which transform an affair of limited hostility into a 'question of honour'. A man whose grass is being raided merely retaliates upon the thief, if he is not already doing so.

But a family has hostile relations of grass-stealing with only its immediate grazing neighbours. And since the summer pastures are reallocated each year a man is unlikely to have the same neighbours two years in succession. Therefore, over the years these hostilities are diffused, as it were, throughout the
 571 local gathering of families. In general, shepherds who must live
 609 in or close to the same village express hostility in their attitudes
 578 rather than in their actions. An almost aggressive secrecy, the cloistered care of unmarried girls, the pleasure taken in the misfortunes of others and the fear of the evil eye, the slanderous vilification of all unrelated people and their motives, are indicative of these attitudes. On the other hand, people are punctilious
 [578] in their formal greetings when they meet. Women exchange
 [521] careful and guarded conversation at the well, probing for information and avoiding the need to give it; but with civility. And their men drink in the coffee-shop and play cards with self-assertion but apparent *bonhomie*—yet always on guard for a possible slight, and always with a mental picture of who is for them, and who against, in the immediate vicinity.

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During the spring and autumn migrations between the moun-⁵⁷¹
tains and the plains, many thousands of sheep move along the ⁶⁰⁹
main road from Jannina to the coastal area around and south ²²¹
of Igoumenitsa. On these occasions, men and their sheep who ²³³
normally live at a distance find themselves head to tail on the ⁵⁷⁸
same stretch of road, jostling one another for the meagre
stretches of roadside grass, blocking one another's passage on
the road, or travelling in the pall of dust raised by the flock in
front. In these circumstances, families give a very free rein to
their hostility, fights are frequent and sheep theft at night is one
of the excitements of the road to which young men look for-
ward. But if on these occasions a man finds himself immediately
behind a flock with which he may share a boundary during the
coming six months, he moves off the road and waits for half an
hour until distance or another flock places a barrier between
future neighbours. However, it would be wrong to interpret the
relative restraint shown in relations with neighbouring families
as reflecting any measure of co-operation. But shepherds and
their sheep are peculiarly vulnerable to attack, and it is a struc-
tural imperative of such a community that hostility between
groups living in close proximity be controlled, if only through
their fear of mutual destruction.

Hostility is a kind of relationship, and providing it is limited ⁵⁷¹
in such a way that it cannot succeed in its ultimate aim, that is ⁵⁷⁸
the annihilation of the adversary, it may represent an important
element in the pattern of social relations of a community. This
is the case among the Sarakatsani where the opportunities for
the expression of open hostility are limited by the constant
demands of the flocks on the shepherds' attention, and the cir-
cumstance that the shepherds and their animals are physically
dispersed. Obviously the ability of one man to get at another
is always an important factor in a relationship of hostility. But
these behaviours are also controlled, partially at any rate, in
the competitive forms through which they are acted out. And ⁵⁷¹
it is perhaps not unprofitable to consider theft in the general ⁵⁷⁸
context of competitive gift exchange. The victim, both from ⁶⁸⁵
honour and self-interest, is obliged to commit a counter-theft.
Like the return gift in other societies, the return theft amongst the
Sarakatsani should ideally be greater than the original theft.
Like a series of prestations and counter-prestations, in theory a

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571 series of thefts never ends, for after each reciprocal act an amount
578 of debt remains.

685 The sheep are part of the family corporation, they are its
571 source of life and wealth, and a family's prestige and pride are
609 closely bound up with the size and condition of its flock. Each
233 sheep and its eccentricities are individually known. The theft
578 of a sheep from a family removes something more than a material
685 object, it takes away also a spiritual value. Thus before 1937
[554] the theft and counter-theft of sheep provided 'a pattern of

spiritual bonds between things which are to some extent part of
persons.* The modern practice of stealing grass, although its
effects are less direct, may be viewed in a similar way. Whereas
gift exchange in other societies achieves a measure of co-operation
between differentiated groups, amongst the Sarakatsani
the reciprocal exchange of theft relates one family group to
another in a nexus of debt, while at the same time it denies the
need, or the possibility, of co-operation and stresses the mutual
exclusiveness and opposition of unrelated families.

* * *

596 The analysis of family roles in the previous chapter revealed
that the solidarity of the family was vulnerable in certain important
respects. These were the loss of sexual honour by a woman
of the family, and competition between father and son or
between brothers. In the first part of this chapter I have discussed
certain values and institutions which support the intense
solidarity of the Sarakatsani family and are in various ways sanctions
against the potentially deviant attitudes described in the
analysis of family roles; for instance, there were ideas about
blood, divorce, illegitimacy, secrecy; and institutions of corporate
property and family honour. In the final section of this
chapter certain beliefs about the inevitable opposition and
hostility of unrelated families have been examined as well as
some institutions through which they are expressed. And this
reciprocal exchange of hostility represents a further sanction
that encourages the identification of the interests and affections
of family members in opposition to all who do not belong.

[113] * Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, translated by Ian Gunnison, London, 1954,
p. 11.

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The Sarakatsanos does not deny the obligation to his merchant. Two heads of family went so far as to say that they would feel ashamed to leave, without just cause, a merchant who had supported them not only with credits but also, sometimes, with his political influence. But their feelings of obligation are ambivalent. In other contexts hostility is expressed. It is alleged that the merchant shamelessly exploits the shepherd and that all his actions are moved by entirely selfish motives. 'He, too, has a burn on his bottom' (έχει και αυτός τὸ καλοκάψιμό του), that is, he, too, has his own troubles and interests.

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Through the cheese merchant the Sarakatsanos is able to dispose of the most valuable part of the produce of his flock and to obtain the money he needs to pay for the pasturage of his animals and the needs of his family which are related to prestige as well as to bare subsistence. The system of credits provides the shepherd with the means to survive years when natural or political difficulties would otherwise force him to sell part of the flock to meet his commitments. It has also made it possible for the shepherds in recent years to raise slightly their material standard of living.

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The growth of debts has brought a certain stability and particularism to relations between merchants and shepherds. Debt provides a basis for a permanent balance of expectations between the two parties despite the asymmetrical character of the relationship. The merchant is assured of the supply of milk which is essential for his prosperity, the shepherd is relatively assured of credit and political support when his grazing rights are threatened. The powerful merchant's ability to support a wide system of credit brings him prestige and the right to move amongst the provincial *élite*; the credit which he gives to the shepherd provides the necessary material basis of the latter's social prestige in his own community. Debts maintain these relationships. They produce in creditors some sense of obligation coupled with a determination not to allow the relationship to become an affective and diffuse bond of patronage, in debtors a mixed attitude of gratefulness for the support and protection they receive and enmity because they cannot escape.

6. CONCLUSION

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It is evident that the form and function of patronage connexions are immediately related to the moral solidarity and isolation of

CONCLUSION

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the family, and to the reciprocal hostility and distrust that exist between families unrelated by kinship or marriage. In general, there are few circumstances where his own wishes, or public opinion, allow a Sarakatsanos to honour an obligation outside the family at the expense of an obligation within it. Moreover, with the assistance of some kinsmen or affines the economy of each family is generally self-sufficient, and working co-operation between unrelated men is seldom necessary or, indeed, practicable. Families, within the community, compete for social prestige in terms of values which underline the particularist obligations to the family honour. A man's work, affections, and moral obligations are almost exclusively contained within the one small group. The commitment of energy, physical resources, or deep affection to an unrelated person is a kind of betrayal. For these reasons men do not associate, even within the community, on the basis of any universal principle of fair dealing. Nepotism is an obligation not a moral fault; and honour is opposed to the canon of honesty.

Inhibitions against self-seeking conduct are yet more tenuous in the relations of men who do not share the common bonds of community. The Sarakatsanos expects to be exploited by the merchant and ignored by the government official. The bureaucrat or merchant not only stands outside the local community, he is divided from the villager or shepherd by his status as a member of the urban middle class. The shepherd is aware of the ill-concealed contempt of the 'civilized man' (ὁ πολιτισμένος) for country people and their ways; he knows of the official's meagre and insufficient salary, and something of his competitive struggle to win prestige symbols (houses, clothes, cars, radios) which validate the nuances of family status within this urban middle class. He does not believe in the existence of any ethic of professional bureaucratic service to the community. "They are all 'eaters'" (φαγάδες), he says in sweeping condemnation. It is thought that few officials will exert themselves over the affairs of a man of lower social status unless he is offered some inducement. And generally it is believed that concessions and facilities are seldom to be won on a broad front for the whole community but only as exceptional dispensations to favoured families. In these circumstances men consider it useless to conduct their business with the State on the grounds of their general rights as citizens.

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they are obviously involved in it. But men lie as a matter of habit and principle to deny other people information. And it is one way of expressing their mutual hostility. A head of family who was sincere (εὐλαμπής), or without cunning words (ντρουπρος), would be considered foolish and neglectful of his duty. 577 885 [527]

This is not to say that the Sarakatsani fail to understand the virtues of truth and sincerity; indeed, relations between kinsmen, or between man and God, are based upon them. But between unrelated men the narrow limits of the human condition, particularly envy and poverty, prescribe opposite and meaner values. The essentially 'fallen' character of these relationships is implicit in linguistic usage. Κακός,⁴ bad or evil, is sometimes used to indicate a skilful man, especially in operations where cleverness or cunning is required. Πονηρός, which means cunning in the sense of the worker-out of evil, is very frequently used to describe a man like Lambros whose cleverness has to be grudgingly admitted and admired by other men. And, on the other hand, καλός, good, in contexts of character description often refers to a man who is merely weak and irresolute. 577 609 828 192

But the truly clever man does not give the impression that he is a threat to other men. Except where the interests of his family are critically at stake, he is careful to appear as honourable and well-intentioned towards unrelated men. There are, however, men who practise a small kind of cunning in all their actions. These persons are described as cunning in a sense that is wholly bad. Μάγας, which means a cunning untrustworthy person, a bearer of mean and untrue scandals, is a word often applied to this kind of man. In the Sarakatsan imagination such a man is small, bent, thin featured, and with narrow close set eyes. The cunning of these men is not the intelligent cleverness of a Lambros, rather it resembles the sexual cunning of women. Both corrupt. The latter corrupts the nobility of men, the former society in general. Cleverness and cunning are legitimate and praiseworthy where their object is the protection or advancement of family interests, but not beyond these limits, or for their own sake. 156 577 828 [192] [226]

The heads of families whenever they are free from shepherding οὐδ

⁴ Cf. Höeg, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 168.

7. A SYSTEM OF VALUES

591 Sarakatsani society offers men only three important corporate
 599 memberships: in the family, the local community, and the
 nation. Little conflict arises between the obligations created
 by these different commitments. The interests of the family
 are normally contained within the purposes of the community
 when it faces other communities, those of the community
 are contained within the aims of the nation opposed to the
 rest of the world. In war, the actions of a soldier reflect simul-
 taneously on the honour of his family, his community, and his
 nation. And in each instance the honour and interests of the
 individual and of the group are mutually implicated.

Honour refers to an exclusive identification. The honour
 of a group is opposed to the honour of another if only for the
 reason that there is an implicit comparison between different
 honours in reference to a pattern of ideal attributes. But
 honour also reflects on the correct status relations between
 individuals or groups. When two groups are in communication
 the behaviour of the persons representing them implies, on
 either side, a certain evaluation of the other group. If a man
 suffers treatment that is less than his due, his honour, and the
 honour of the group he represents, are diminished. But in the
 experience of the Sarakatsani the interests and prestige of
 families, communities, and nations are inevitably in colli-
 sion, and this must lead men to exploit others where they can.
 Thus relations between different groups always carry the threat
 of the depreciation of the honour of one for the benefit of the
 other. Although relations between families, communities, and
 nations refer, ideally, to an equality in honour, yet at each
 level those who represent these groups must struggle with all
 their resources of courage and self-discipline to maintain these
 ideal status relations. These struggles are intense. And in every
 significant context of action the world is necessarily divided
 with dramatic definition into own people and strangers,
 friends and enemies. Consequently relationship radically
 affects the forms of approved behaviour. It is a virtue generally
 to cheat, deceive, and lie to non-kinsmen, but the same conduct
 towards kinsmen would be shameful and, often, sinful as
 well. The values of honour and prestige are exclusive and

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between brothers; wanton cruelty to, or neglect of, the family's horses, sheep or goats. 783

The third category of sins are those which exist in the field of general morality in the behaviour of one man towards another. A man feels little obligation to discipline himself in his conduct towards an unrelated person, but there are limits which ought not to be transgressed, and generally speaking these limits are related to the consequences that immoderate behaviour would have for the victim's family. To exploit a very poor man, or refuse charity to a beggar, is sinful. To slander the name of an unmarried girl is a sin. In these instances there enters a hint of the idea of *hubris*, an arrogance of act, or thought, overstepping bounds set by God and involving wrongdoing to others which threatens the moral or physical existence of a family and is not excusable on grounds of self-interest. 783 609 ●

The essence of sin is that, in one form or another, it is wilful rebellion against God and His institutions. And for such an act of personal sin a man may expect to be punished by God through sickness, death, or some catastrophe that leads his family into want. Catastrophe or misfortune is by no means always explained as the punishment of God, but where a man is guilty of a known sin, any misfortune which befalls him, or another member of his immediate family, will certainly be recognized as divine punishment. As I have already suggested, Sarakatsani are skilled in listing the sins of others. The sufferer and his kin, on the other hand, will more often ascribe their ill luck not to God's wrath, but to the evil eye, a manifestation of other men's sinful and envious natures. 783 784

It must be stressed that the Sarakatsani visualize the punishment of God as being realized essentially in this world either against themselves, or their children. Hell is a place of vaporous darkness where sinful men suffer in cauldrons of pitch; Paradise is a plain of well-watered grass covered with spring flowers. These conceptions exist, yet seem to make little impression. If an evil man dies unscathed, men are not content with thoughts of the torments he may suffer in Hell; they concentrate their attention on the misfortunes which will certainly overtake his children in this world. The wages of sin is death. But it is not the spiritual death which follows physical death which 783 784 771

585 being moved in and wedged among the company
 262 as tightly as jigsaw pieces. Wicker-bound demi-
 [273] johns of wine were beginning to travel from hand
 to hand overhead. Glasses clashed convivially
 together, miraculously filling up as soon as they
 were drained, and plates were returning again and
 again for second or third helpings. Outside the
 window, swarms of guests were feasting under
 the trees. Whole lambs were being flourished,
 sizzling and smoking on their spits, and we could
 hear the crash of cleaver on block and the crunch
 of hewn bones as a sinewy nomad toiled like a
 headsman to keep pace with two hundred mag-
 [252] nificent appetites. Nothing accompanied this
 delicious roast except cross sections of dark and
 excellent bread sliced from loaves like small mill-
 stones and hot from the domed ovens outside.

• [609] It was, in a way, a Stone Age banquet. Strangers,
 on occasions like these, are the objects of eager
 solicitude: special morsels, forkfuls of liver or kidney
 and even more recondite appendages, are con-
 stantly being proffered, and helpings of brain are
 delved from heads which have been bisected
 lengthwise and opened like a casket, each half,
 sometimes, still equipped with a twisting horn.
 Avoidance of the sheep's eyes is a recurrent prob-
 lem for outsiders. They are highly prized by
 mountaineers, but for all but the most assimilated
 travelers, the message they signal from the prongs
 is one of harrowing reproach.

585 After an hour or so the general hum of talk sank
 533 to a single deep bourdon note which resolved itself
 into the opening phrases of a Klephtic song, the
 first stanza being sung by a group of two or three,
 and then repeated in a slow and long-drawn roar,
 starting with the vehemence of a lurch, by the rest
 of the shepherds. Rather surprisingly, so far from
 the Peloponnesus, it was about the great War of In-
 dependence leader, Kolokotronis. (I would have
 expected some more northern Klepht, and above
 all, Katsandónis, a Sarakatsán from the wild

[539] Agrapha Mountains.) "Kolokotronis shouted,"
 sang the nomads' voices, "and all the world trem-
 bled: 'Where are you, poor Nikitara, you whose
 feet are winged? Go, go and seize the Turks, drive
 them like hares into a trap, slay some and capture
 some, and lock some up in the castle. . . . At
 Antikorpha and Trikorpha the blood is flowing
 like a brook.'" This gave rise to another deep
 melopoeia from the south: "They have blocked all
 the roads of the Morea, they have sealed up all
 the passes." When the massed voices died down,
 the steady and unchanging note of the smaller
 group continued in a wail, setting up its own curi-
 ous vibration. This comparative lull was always
 followed by the long deep cry of conjuration,
 "Oré!" ("Oh, you!" or "Hark!"), which ushers
 in most Klephtic stanzas, and another act from the

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2. Definition of the moral phenomenon in Sociology
et Philosophie /Sociology and Philosophy/, p. 49 f.

said, emphasizing the methodological prerequisite necessary for any study of moral phenomena.

Now if it is true that morality is a sum total of ideas by which behavior must be prompted, if these ideas represent values, and if behavior which does not conform to them is socially disapproved, /then/ these assertions, expressed concretely in terms of Sarakatsani reality, are sufficient to guide our research. They must also determine the outline of this chapter.

* * * *

577 The fundamental values of Sarakatsani morality are the family, chastity, the "community," tradition, finally insubordination.

The analysis of the aspects of their lives that we have studied up to now testifies to this. Everything that has to do with the family (descent, relations of all kinds between its members, including economic relations) is intimately bound up with morality. /238/ Chastity involves the control of sexuality in its known forms, the prohibition of adultery, the guarantee of the legitimacy of descendants, the virginity requirement and very strict morals imposed on young girls. Although this subject is connected with the family, we shall emphasize it particularly, in view of its importance for the Sarakatsani. When they speak of morality they are referring to sexual life. Moreover, an assault against decency and virtue is considered by them as more grave morally than an attack on a person's life. If a woman is sexually abused, the infamy falls on all the members of her family whose honor is thereafter tarnished. Honor and sexuality go together among our herders, as they do, in fact, in all of Greece. In the context of the same ideas, discussion and allusions relating to sexuality are systematically avoided, although frank speech is common among persons of the same age and the same sex. But it is necessary to be reserved toward

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(834)

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(834)

577 /238 cont./

577 elders, the opposite sex and strangers. Let us recall in this connection
577 that the separation of the sexes is still manifest in the custom that
577 requires men and women to dance separately at festivals.

577 As for the "community," everyone must consider that his life belongs
577 to the service of others, hence the obligation of solidarity and cooperation
577 on all levels. Conversely and consequently, distrust of non-Sarakatsani is
577 obligatory, though the rules of hospitality are not violated.

577 As far as tradition is concerned, there is nothing to add to what has
577 been said up to now. Finally, with respect to courage and bravery, indis-
577 pensable qualities for people whose hard life is carried on in isolation,
577 it is necessary to point out that this subject is also bound up with
577 patriotism. At the birth of each boy it is customary for relatives and
577 friends to wish the parents of the newborn child: "That he will one day
577 become a resistance fighter /maquisard/ and the head of a band." (3)

3. Reported by B. Skafidas: Ibid., p.57.

577 This wish has a definite meaning: it expressed the desire that the newborn
577 child, once he becomes an adult, will participate actively in revolts
577 against the Turks and that he will even distinguish himself as chief of the
577 rebels. However, because of the fact that some Sarakatsani have practiced
577 brigandage the impression arose that this aspiration tended to lean to
577 banditry. In /239/ this impression, obviously erroneous, one might
577 recognize the phenomenon of an "out group" /cited in English/; (4)

577 4. See W.G. Sumner: Folkways, A study of the sociological
577 importance of usages, manners, customs, mores and morals
577 /cited in English/, 1906.--T. Newcomb: Social Psychology
577 /cited in English/, London, 1955.

577 the surrounding society is always ready to accuse the Sarakatsani of acts
577 it disapproves. (5) If some of them have actually practiced brigandage, we

/245 cont./

128 as he too plots his course in the half-light of his conscience, reacts in the presence of the unknown, the mysterious, the marvelous in the cosmic and human universe, through action (magic), contemplation both rational and affective (knowledge, myth, religion), strong emotion harmoniously ordered (esthetics). We shall thus proceed in broad outlines, though the order followed in our analysis will not be exactly the same. No matter. Our goal this time is to come near to the Sarakatsani soul. We shall seek it out in the hope of reaching it through its external manifestations--through the works which it engenders and encompasses.

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CHAPTER I

SARAKATSANI MAGIC

123 The path to the study of magic is barred by numerous obstacles.
609 First the terminology. Our herders designate by the term "magic"
789 everything that pertains to black magic, the magic of charms and spells.
754 For them white magic, curative, indissolubly connected with everyday life,
755 does not deserve this name.

Next, the curative ritual is hidden in the shadow of the secret and mysterious, for fear that its communication, especially to a stranger, would desecrate it and make all manipulation ineffective. Similarly, and all the more so, discussions about black magic are forbidden in order to avoid attracting the evil, the mere mention of which might provoke it.

In the third place, the beliefs and ideas underlying the practices are inaccessible. They are either forgotten or purposely hidden or falsely formulated to confuse the investigator or give him a reply which "would please him."

123 All we can do is merely to record some scraps of information and con-
124 versations, to observe daily life, to make a list of actions, words, materials used and, as much as possible, to resort personally to magic cures. Then comes the effort to cross-check the information and observations,